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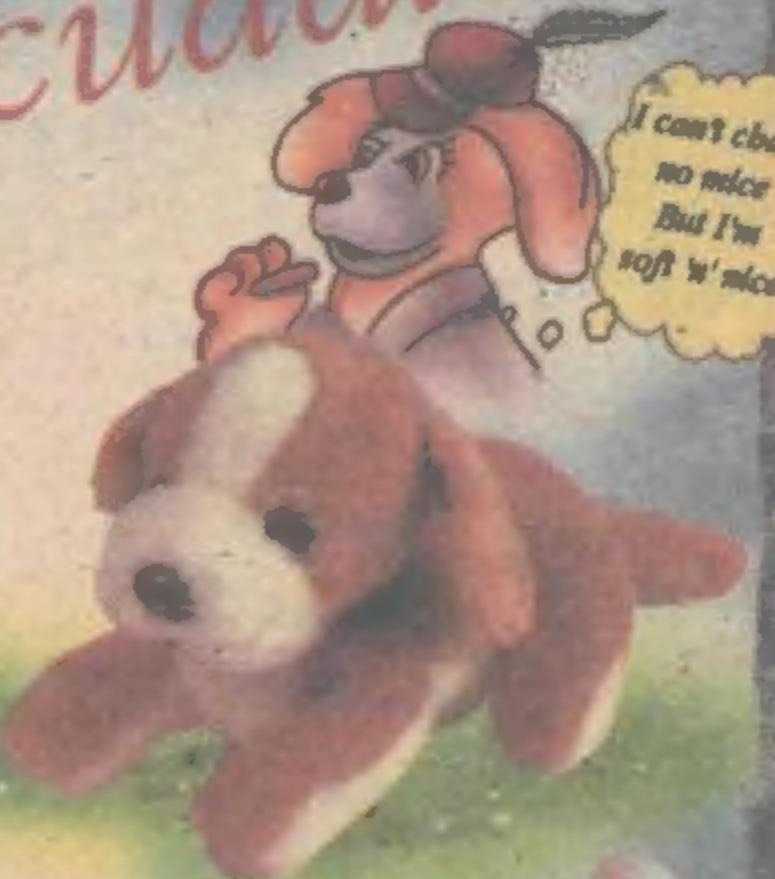


To
be

little one a cuddles?



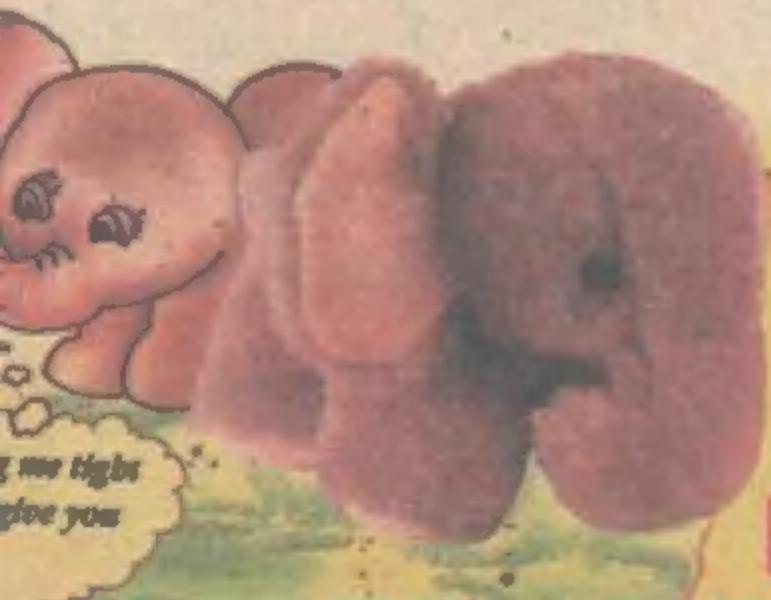
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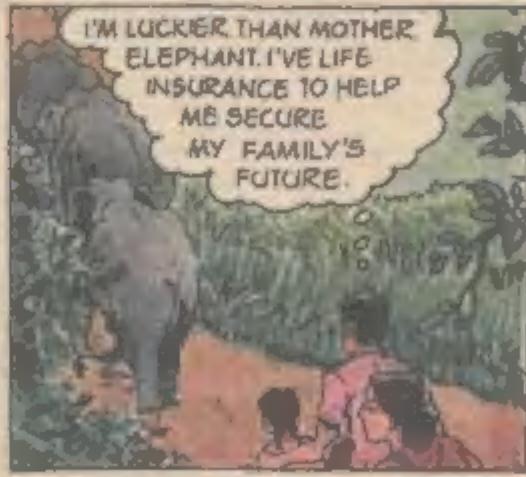
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CHANDAMAMA

IN THIS ISSUE

Vol. 22 MARCH 1992 No. 9

Stories :

Ambition	... Page 12
Adventures Of Apurva-13	... Page 19
The Guru's Choice	... Page 27
The King's Doubt	... Page 32
The Minister Of Mandi	... Page 37
Veer Hanuman-18	... Page 45
Iron Boots And His Friends	... Page 54
A Change Sets In	... Page 60
That Too Needs Talent	... Page 61

Picture Stories :

Panchatantra-15	... Page 14
Washington's Wish	... Page 53

Features :

Another Commonwealth	... Page 10
Supplement- 41	... Page 33
World Of Sport	... Page 44
World Of Nature	... Page 64

**And News Flash, Let Us Know
and More!**

NEXT ISSUE

Vol. 22 APRIL 1992 No. 10

A FOOL, WAS HE? Lal is a simpleton. People call him "Bewacooph" meaning fool. They have their own reasons. Wife Lali complains to him about the leaking roof and the peeling plaster on the walls of their house. He agrees the house needs repair but refuses to do anything about it. Lal devises a way to make him do it, and he does not realise he is repairing his own house. The lighter side of the story tells you how he does it, or he is made to do it.

RAVANA REJECTS BROTHERS' ADVICE: As Lanka gets ready to meet an attack by the army of monkeys Ravana's brother, Vibhishana, advises early return of Sita to avert a disaster of which he is certain. The appeal is not acceptable to Ravana, who even challenges Rama to fight with him to rescue Sita. Kumbhakarna cautions his brother: Rama is invincible. Some of his commanders support Ravana and assure him that his army is ready for a fight to the finish. VEER HANUMAN describes the war preparations in Lanka.

Plus the first part of a new serial, THE MAGIC PALACE, and all favourites including PANCHATANTRA and CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT.

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NAGI REDDI

Founder:
CHAKRAPANI



EXCELLENCE IS GOD

"God made man in His own image." This is what our scriptures tell us. Scientists, philosophers and intellectuals have always wondered how perfect God's creation—man—is. The shape of the body, placing of the several organs and limbs: when we take into account each of these, we easily come to the conclusion that if any one of them were to have a different shape or size, or were to get displaced, then the body will no more be perfect and be not able to carry out its specific function. And the most baffling is that one organ—brain. How it functions has ever remained a mystery.

How else can it be when man has been created exactly like God? If we may put it in other words, it can even be said that God wants man to be perfect as He himself is. This was what prompted a veteran journalist of Bombay to tell his Parsi youth audience that "Excellence is God; God is where excellence is." He went on to declare, "To be excellent is to discover God within ourselves."

The exercise to attain excellence starts from our childhood—first by our parents, then by our teachers, through our education and the books that we read; and by our friends, and later when we become part of society.

All this exercise aims at giving us *good* thoughts, encouraging us to say *good* words, and making us to do *good* deeds. This will take us along the path to excellence.

However, there is something strange about excellence. It has no limit! Take the instance of that great pole vaulter, Sergei Bubka. Every time he makes an attempt, he *exceeds* his previous record. Yet, he says he is not satisfied and feels there is scope for further improvement of the record. That is the kind of spirit everyone should have: not to rest on one's laurels. As Swami Vivekananda would urge: "Strive, and strive hard." In short, effort is the foundation of excellence.

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Another Commonwealth

During the first three weeks of December, you must have come across banner headlines in newspapers, such as "U.S.S.R. DISINTEGRATES", "SOVIET UNION BURIED", "END OF COMMUNISM", "U.S.S.R. NOW HISTORY", and others. They all condensed the rapid and radical developments taking place in the erstwhile Soviet Union, which has given place to a Commonwealth of Independent States or C.I.S. in short.

Now, everybody is familiar

with the political term 'Commonwealth' to denote the group of countries which were once British colonies forming part of the powerful, vast British Empire where, it used to be claimed, the sun never set. India is thus a Commonwealth country; so, too, is Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Australia, Canada, and more than forty other independent nations.

Another Commonwealth has taken birth and it comprises twelve republics which till recently made up the Soviet

Union. The political entity called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) arose after what is known as the October Revolution of 1917, when the Czarist regime of Russia was overthrown by the people under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky. They ushered in ■ rule by the proletariat believing in Communism which gives power to the working class.

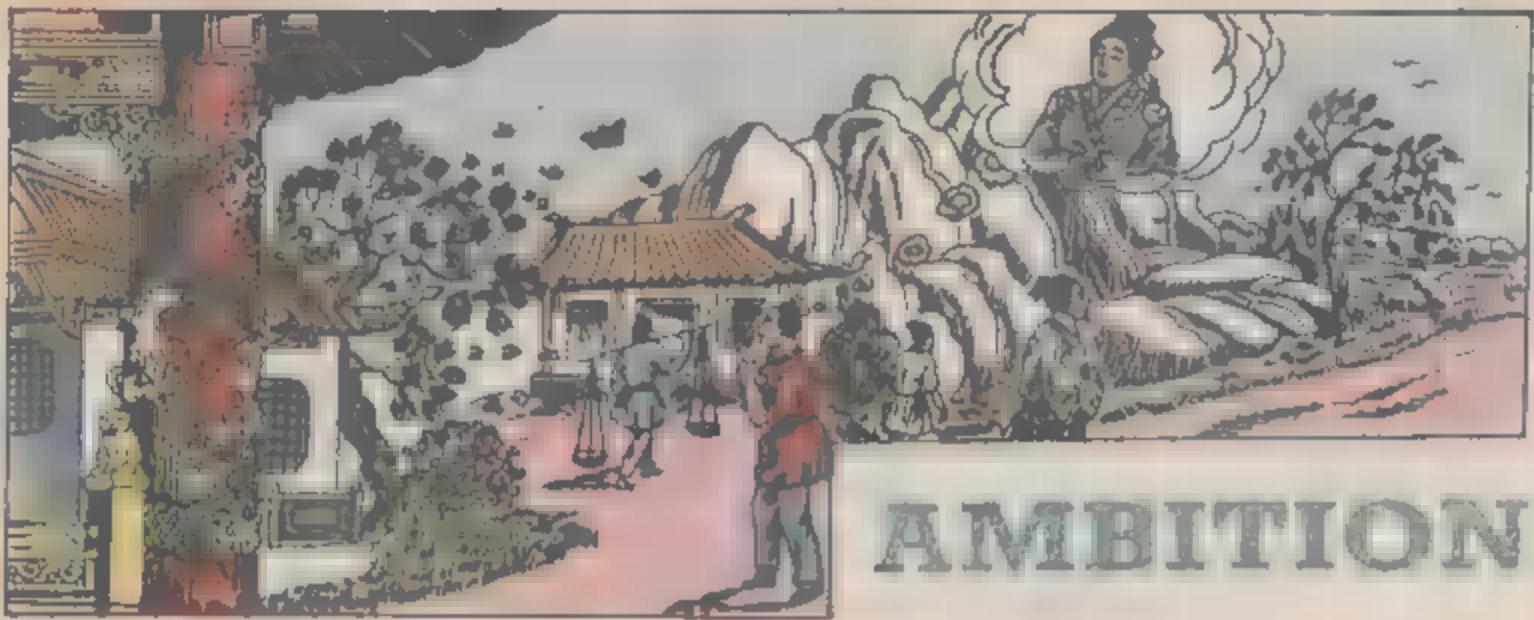
Simmerings among the Soviet republics were evident early last year, when the three Baltic republics—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—decided to break away from the Soviet Union (see *Chandamama*, November 1991). The Soviet President, Mr. Gorbachev, then prepared a new Union treaty, expecting the remaining twelve republics to accept it. His hopes were belied, as several of them clamoured for independence and refused either to attend the meeting he had convened or to sign the treaty.

Mr. Gorbachev announced his resignation as the first—and also last—elected President

and handed over reins to Mr. Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation—the largest and most powerful among the republics. Even as early as December 7, Mr. Yeltsin had favoured forming a 'community' of the republics as against a confederation suggested by Mr. Gorbachev in the revised Union treaty. Ultimately, the nomenclature of 'Commonwealth' was decided, with all the republics acquiring an independent status.

It is not as though the new Commonwealth is a smooth, workable proposition. It has problems to solve and settle—problems like ■ common currency and economy, a unified defence arrangement and agreement, control of the nuclear arms that the Soviet Union had built up and later decided to reduce in number, to mention only ■ few.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 was one of the major milestones in the history of the 20th century. The world now watches with bated breath the after-effects of the most recent 'Russian' revolution.



AMBITION

Long, long ago, there was a famous sculptor in Siang. Huan was very pious and often received blessings from the goddess he worshipped. One day he was invited by a wealthy person to make a statue. As Huan was being taken round the beautiful mansion, he was wonderstruck by all that he saw there. He had never seen such a collection of artefacts anywhere else.

Huan could not help wondering, 'Why can't I, too, become rich and wealthy?' He prayed to the goddess. In no time, his own little house was transformed into a two-storeyed house, full of glittering gold. He gave up his job as a sculptor.

While Huan enjoyed his life as the wealthiest person of that place, there came a government

official who attracted a lot of reverence and respect from the people. He, however, noticed that one person alone had kept himself away and did not pay obeisance to him. And that was the erstwhile sculptor. At the instance of the official, the police went and harassed Huan. Suddenly he had an idea. He prayed to the goddess and told her that he would prefer to be a government official rather than a wealthy gentleman. Huan soon found himself to be a government official.

In the course of his tours, Huan came upon some tribal women and he was attracted by them. Soon he was harassing them. Their cries brought their menfolk to the spot and they gave Huan and his attendants a good thrashing. Huan was full

of remorse that he had to bear all the insults only because he was a government official.

Just ■ he was contemplating that he would better be a tribal woman, the goddess blessed him. Huan was now a comely tribal girl. But, then, she had to work in the fields like other tribal folk, and found it hard to be in the sun morning and afternoon. Huan's next wish was that he would better be ■ cool cloud!

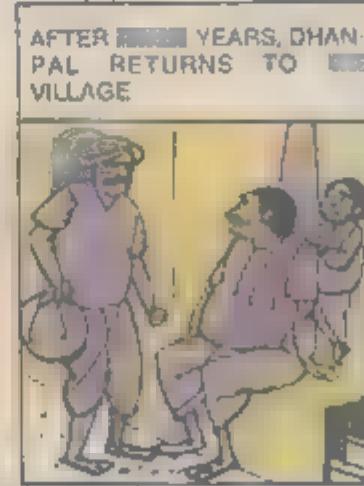
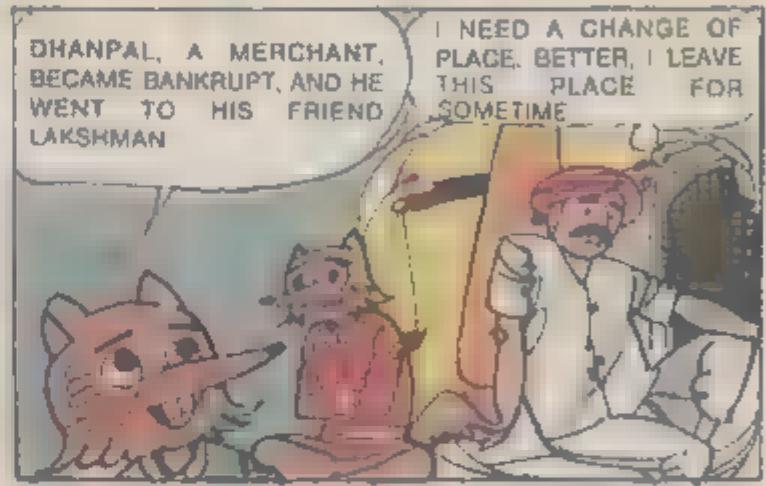
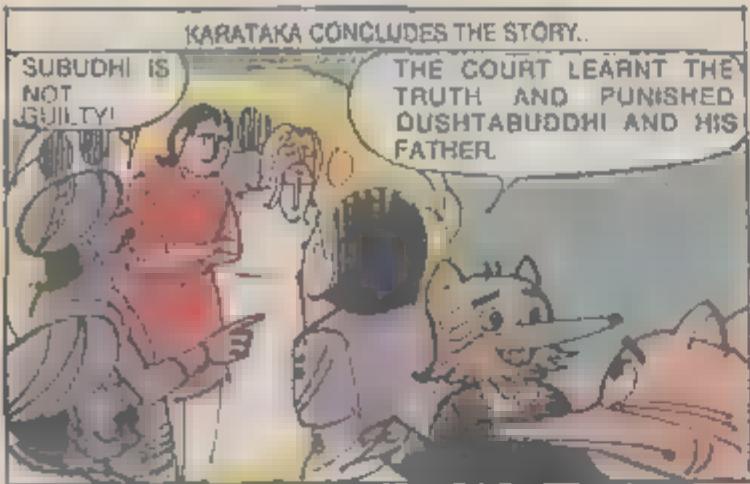
Cloud Huan could not rest even for a while as he was carried away hither and thither by a strong breeze. As there was no limit to Huan's ambitions, his next wish was to become ■ breeze. And he did turn a breeze, and began floating in the air. Suddenly he met with some hindrance and it

was ■ rock. His next wish, too, was granted. Huan was now ■ rock! Soon, sculptors like him were working on it. As they chiselled the sides of the rock, Huan could not bear the hits from their hammers. He prayed to the goddess: "Please save me, O goddess. It was foolhardy of me to have asked for several favours. I regret I was ambitious without a purpose."

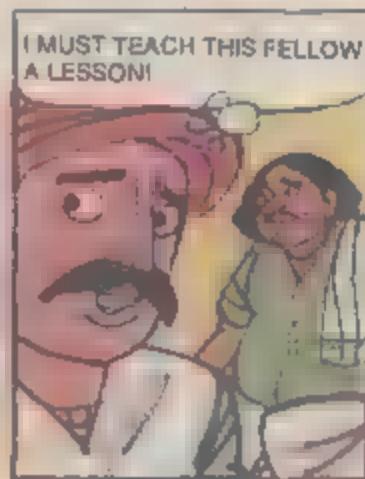
"Yes, Huan," said the goddess, "you had too many ambitions in life, and still you were not happy with yourself. You'd better be ■ sculptor." She then disappeared once and for all. Sculptor Huan also had no occasion to seek any more favours from her.

(A Folk Tale)

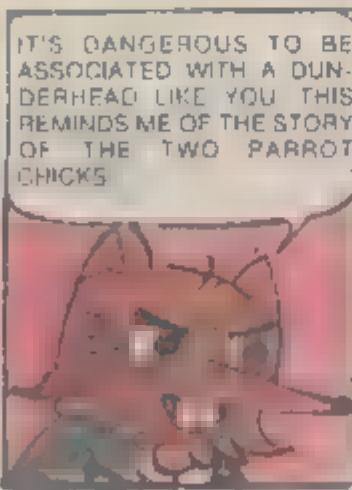
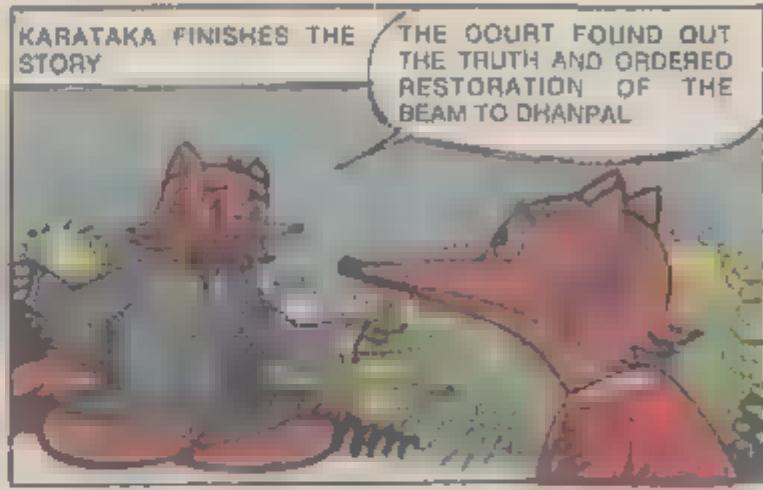
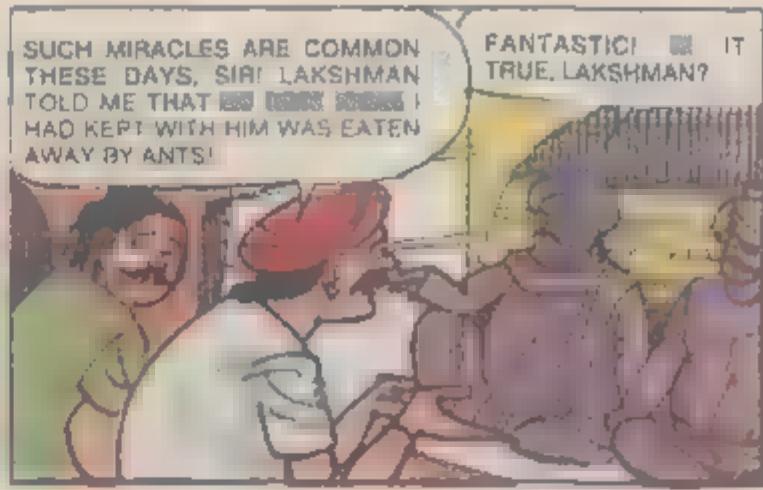
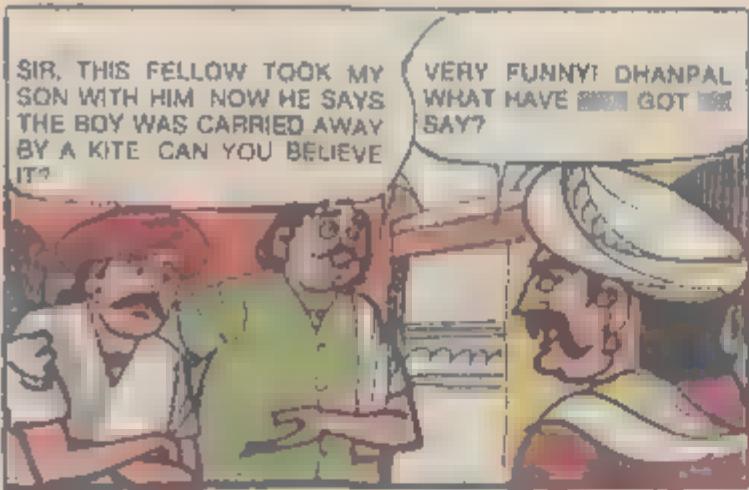




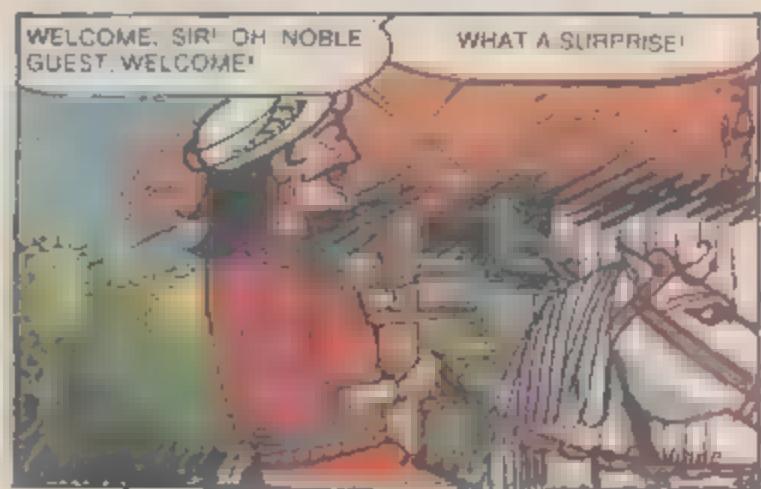
पातेन कन्दुक इवोत्पत्तयार्थः पतन्नपि ।
तथा त्वनार्थः पतति मृत्युण्डपतनं यथा ॥



A worthy man might fall, but he rebounds like a ball.
But when an unworthy man falls, he lies like a lump
of mud.



पूर्वे वयसि यः रान्तः स शान्त इति मृतिः ।
धातुषु कीयमाणेषु शमः कस्य न जायते ॥



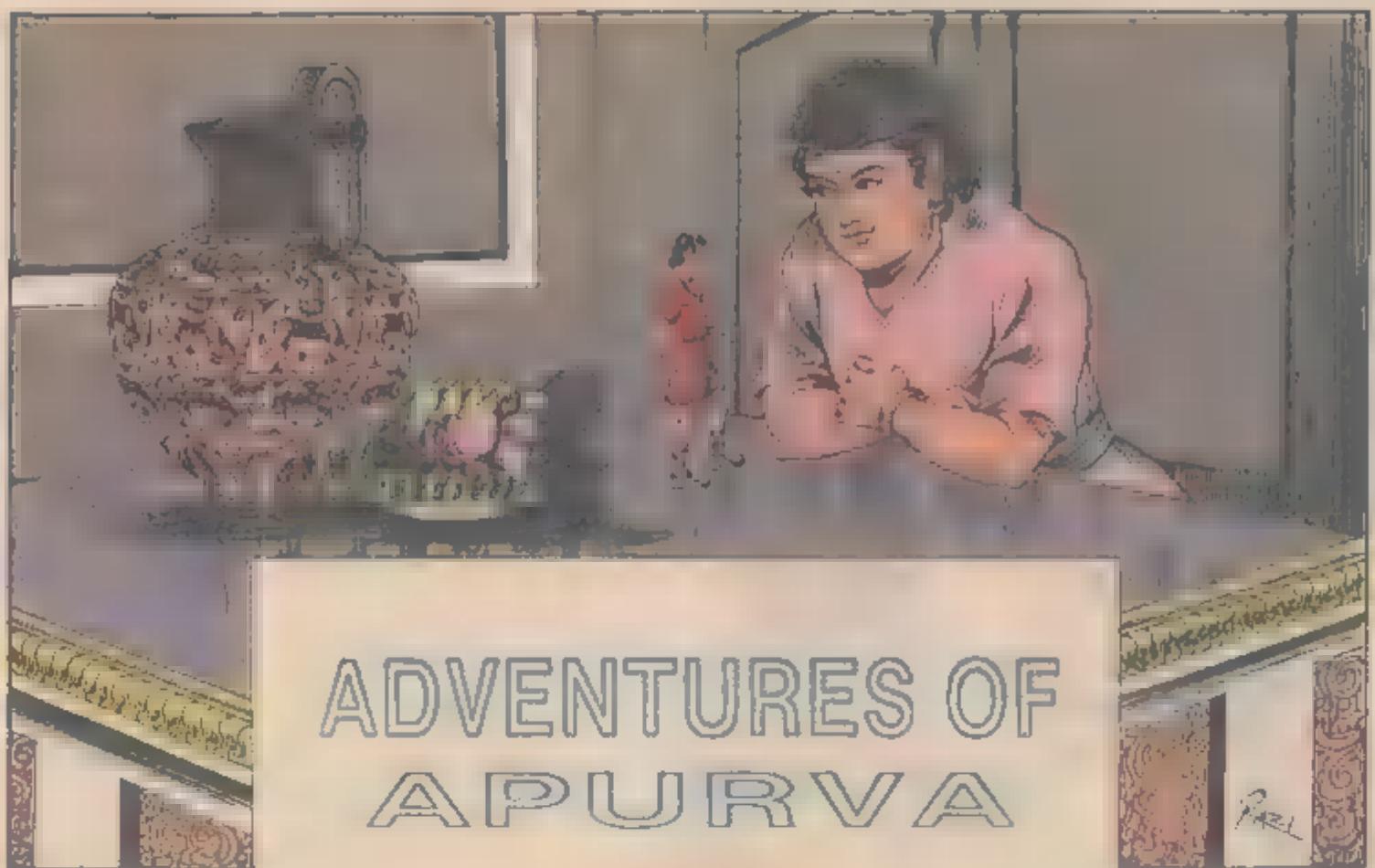
He is really quiet-natured who shows quietude in his youth, who does not appear quiet when, with age, the vitality declines.

IS IT A GRIN OR A SMILE?

Shivabhakta Gurung, of Bombay, had a glance at the question paper, which he found rather easy, and straight away started answering the questions. When he came out of the exam hall, he found his friend crestfallen. He told Gurung that one question was out of the syllabus and he had found it difficult to make heads or tails of it. Gurung knew the answer and he explained it to his friend, but wondered why he should have associated the question with heads and tails. After all the question had nothing to do with one's anatomy! Gurung went home curious, and he looked into the dictionary and found the meaning of the idiom, which simply means confusing, or mixed up, and therefore unable to understand. The expression is generally used in the negative form, "*can't make head or tail of something*", remember no plurals (heads, tails) are used. Some dictionaries use it this way: "cannot make head nor tail of something."

Geeta Kamal, of Bangalore, wants to know the meaning and significance of the idiom, "smile on the face of Cheshire cat". The correct expression is: "*to grin like a Cheshire cat*", and it means, to smile with a broad, contented grin, as if highly amused or knowing a secret. Have you watched Quiz programmes on the TV? The Quiz Master has a question for Team A, but a member of Team B already has the answer on his finger-tips. He grins like a Cheshire cat and will no doubt earn full marks if the Quiz Master turns to him for the answer.





ADVENTURES OF APURVA

13

(Apurva who had emerged from a yajna, is now a young man, but he continues to be tiny in size. He has learnt about a terrible conspiracy. The king's chief minister and a Tantrik, with the help of a witch, are trying to kidnap the princess.)

The birthday of the princess was fast approaching. Apurva had decided to inform the king about it, but he did not know how to do so. It was out of the question for himself—because of his unusual figure—to appear before the king.

He proceeded to meet Samir. Needless to say, Samir was only

too happy to accompany him to the capital.

“Now, you must seek a private audience with the king and tell him everything,” Apurva instructed Samir after narrating to him what he had learnt about the conspiracy.

It was yet another dark night

THE FINAL REVELATION



when the Tantrik suddenly knocked on the minister's door.

"What brings you at this unearthly hour?" asked the minister with some surprise, because they had met only a day before and the plan for kidnapping the princess had been finalised to the last detail.

"Minister, do I ever meet you at earthly hours?" asked the Tantrik with a sneer.

"No, what I meant was, something very urgent must have obliged you to visit ■ again!" said the minister.

"You're right. The holy witch thinks somehow our plan has

leaked out; someone is keeping ■ eye on us!"

"But that's impossible!"

"Nothing is impossible. Such a feeling would not have come to her unless there is some truth behind it," said the Tantrik. He demanded, "Have you by any chance given a hint of our plan to your wife or to anybody else dear to you?"

"Never!" the minister said emphatically.

"I believe you. But we've to be more cautious and more alert. Plant your trusted men all around the castle. The vigil must continue day and night. Let no stranger meet the king. But even your men must not know the purpose of the vigil," the Tantrik instructed.

"That'll be done," said the chief minister. "A number of officials and palace servants are loyal to me."

Apurva was not aware of this meeting between the two conspirators, but when Samir was not allowed to meet the king, he understood that the situation was more difficult than he had imagined.

It was the day before the birthday of the princess. Apurva

had learnt that at the time of sunset, the king enjoyed a stroll on the terrace of the palace. He wrote down the outline of the conspiracy and advised the king to post bodyguards for the priest and warned against the princess going into the narrow passage between the deity's throne and the wall.

Applying his supernatural hold over the birds and beasts, he enrolled the services of a kite and asked it to carry the letter to the palace terrace while the sun was setting.

The kite obeyed him, but as it was flying over the palace buildings holding the letter in its beak, a curious palace guard shot an arrow at it. The arrow missed the bird, but it got scared. It hurried away and the letter fell into the canal surrounding the fort.

Apurva had no occasion to learn about the incident. He was more or less certain that the letter had reached the king and the necessary precaution would have been taken.

The capital went festive right from the morning on the birthday of the princess. Members of the nobility and representatives from the royal families of the



neighbouring kingdoms greeted the princess warmly. With her smiles and sweet words, the charming princess won everybody's heart.

Samir mixed with the people and watched the events. From time to time, he slipped into a deserted house not far from the palace. Apurva waited there and received reports of the goings-on around the palace. Both he and Samir were surprised that neither the king nor the princess showed any sign of tension. There was no evidence of any special step taken for the safety of the princess.

Apurva now began to suspect



that the letter he despatched had not reached the king. What was to be done? He and Samir proceeded to the temple, for, the procession bearing the princess had already begun to wend its way towards the temple.

More than a thousand people had gathered in front of the temple to receive the princess, the king, and the other members of the royal family. Although there were numerous lamps inside the temple, it was dimly lit.

The princess, accompanied by her maids, entered the temple. As she stood before the deity with folded hands, the priest chanted

hymns. Needless to say, the real priest had been kidnapped. It was the Tantrik disguised as the priest.

"Come on, Princess, please go round the deity's throne. You should do it three times. Follow me," said the priest.

The princess obeyed him.

"Nobody else need come with the princess. I'm performing some very special, very sacred rites for her," announced the priest.

Two assistants of the priest raised their voice to a pitch and chanted some hymns as the princess passed from the sight of her maids, into the dusky passage. The faint shriek she gave out could not be heard by anybody. She had already been pushed into the secret tunnel and the Tantrik, too, had stepped into it.

The king was all the while waiting outside the temple.

"Your Majesty, the princess has been kidnapped!" Samir pushed his way through the crowd and shouted at the top of his voice.

"Who's this mad chap?" asked the king.

"Your Majesty, I'm not any

mad man. Don't you recognise me? I'm Samir. I and my friends had helped your soldiers to capture the pirates. The princess is indeed kidnapped!"

"But she's inside the temple!" said the king.

"She's not. Call her and you'll see!" shouted Samir.

"Is this true?" The king looked at one of the maids and ordered her to call the princess. The very next moment she and the other maids anxiously reported to the king that the princess was not to be seen!

The two assistants of the false priest were trying to slip away.

"Your Majesty, capture these fellows and immediately come to the end of the secret tunnel which extends from inside the temple. A wicked Tantrik has pushed the princess into the tunnel," said Samir.

The king's bodyguards pounced upon the Tantrik's assistants. The king, his general, and ■ dozen bodyguards galloped into the forest. Samir shared the general's horse. Apurva, of course, ran like a streak of lightning, unseen by others.

It did not take them more than



■ few minutes to reach the spot where the tunnel ended.

"My lord, take hold of this witch! She is waiting here to suck the life-force of the princess?" said Samir.

"Ha! Ha! How dare you approach me! I can reduce you to ashes!" said the witch, who was sitting on the dry branch of a banyan tree which touched the ground.

"Keep sitting there! If you try to move, you'll be reduced to ashes yourself!"

This was uttered by ■ strange voice. The king and Samir looked back. They saw the lumi-



nous figure of a sage.

"Who are you, Sir?" asked the king.

Before the sage had answered the king, Samir prostrated before the sage and said, "I know who you are. You're the Master of Apurva. He had told ■■ that if the situation became too critical, he would meditate on you and you'll come to our rescue."

The sage smiled.

"You're right. I was in deep meditation when Apurva's call reached me. This is no ordinary witch, but one who has tremendous power. As you know, every kind of power can be used

for wrong purposes or for right purposes. The same law applies to supernatural powers. This witch has always used her powers for her own weird satisfaction. She has lived for centuries by sucking the youth and vitality of her victims. She intended doing the same with the princess. But with my powers, I've deprived her of all her powers," said the sage.

A shrill, fearful laugh came from the witch. "Sage, you haven't been able to deprive me of all my powers. I've with me my last power. Look here. I'm now going to apply it on myself!" said the witch and the very next moment she was seen going up in flames. Nothing of hers remained, barring a handful of the darkest ashes. It all happened just in two or three seconds.

"Indeed, that was the one power she still had—to destroy herself," commented the sage.

By now, the king, too, had prostrated himself before the sage. "O holy man, where's my daughter?" he asked the sage.

"And where is Apurva?" asked Samir.

"When the witch knew that her

game was up, she sent a signal to the Tantrik who is inside the tunnel along with the princess. The Tantrik was planning to use the princess ■ his shield and to escape and to kill the princess, if necessary, to steal her Moonlight diamond. That's why, through ■ small opening Apurva had to enter the tunnel, take the Tantrik prisoner, and bring the princess out to safety. The door at this end of the tunnel can be opened only from inside. Apurva will open it and come out of the tunnel."

No sooner had the sage finished saying this than there was ■ sound from inside the cave behind the banyan tree. A young

man, looking ■ handsome as a god, emerged from it, dragging with him the Tantrik who looked as pale as a ghost.

Behind them appeared the princess, smiling, even though looking ■ bit dazed. While the princess ran into her father's arms, the young man ran towards the sage. He ■ about to fall down to touch the sage's feet when the sage stopped him and held him in his embrace.

"My boy, now it was time for you to come out of your tiny form and assume ■ normal figure. That's how you could give a fight to the Tantrik. From now on you'll remain so," said the



sage.

"Father, this young man saved me from the clutches of this wicked man," the princess told the king, first pointing at Apurva and then at the Tantrik.

"How grateful I am to him!" said the king, looking at Apurva.

"It's time for me to depart!" said the sage.

"For me, too. I must go with you," said Apurva.

The sage smiled. "Is it because you'll come away with ■■ that I gave you a normal human figure? Till today you were doing good to others, hiding from everybody; now you must do the same in a normal way, as a just, brave, and wise leader of men!" he said.

"But..." Apurva was hesitant.

"Are you thinking how you'll do so? My kingdom is at your

disposal. If the sage agrees, you'll succeed me to the throne—and if my daughter and you both agree, to her maternal uncle's kingdom, too, for she is the heir to that!" said the king.

The princess blushed. The sage called them both and blessed them. "You'll make an ideal, happy couple. Great and noble things will be done by you!" he said and vanished in the twinkling of an eye.

After the initial astonishment was over, rejoicing began. It went on for days together. Apurva and the princess were married. The wicked minister and the Tantrik were thrown into prison.

The king retired from his royal duties, leaving the throne to Apurva. Samir was the new minister.

The End

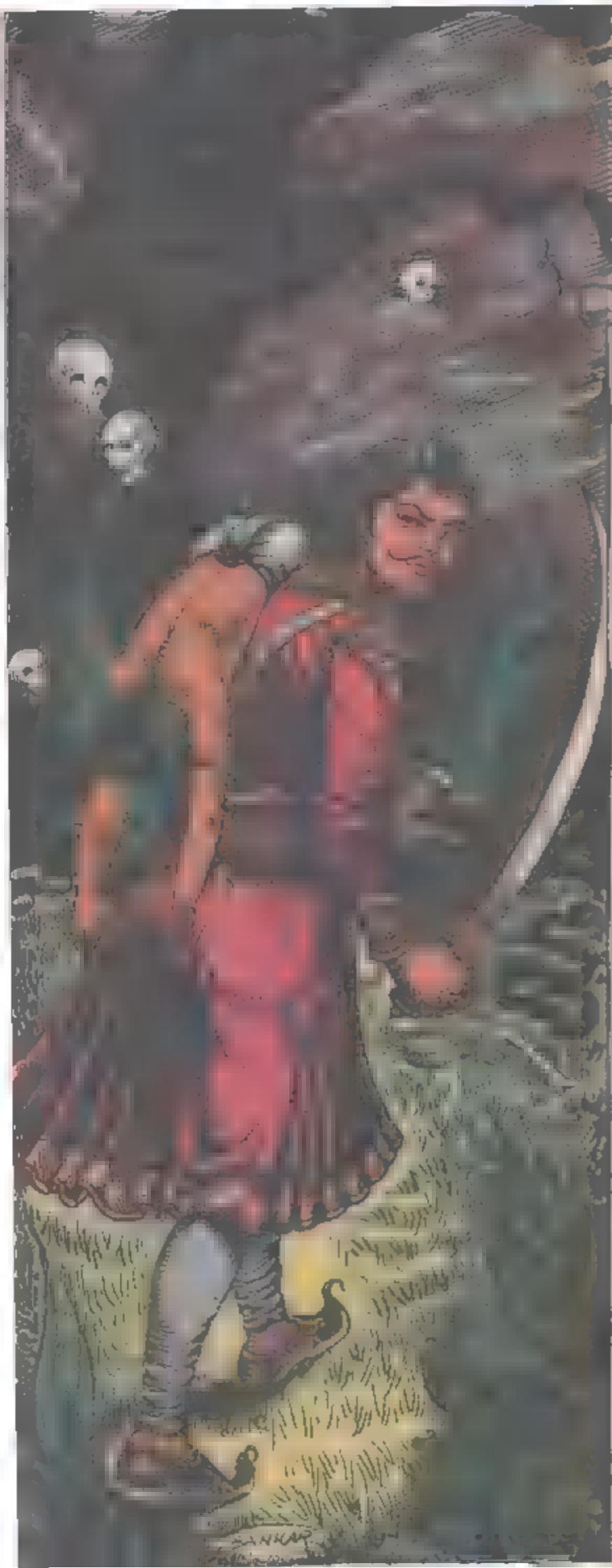


The Guru's Choice

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time; gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O king, you seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite so as to achieve something. It will be futile, and I shall tell you a story which will make you realise why I say so."

Vidyanath had an ashram in a forest where he trained students in arts and the use of arms. The





sage had many disciples. Loknath and Sivadas were the brightest among them. The other students could never reach their standard. The two of them were so clever and intelligent, and they sharpened their intellect by constant meditation and rigorous discipline. Naturally, the guru had a special regard and affection for them.

One day, he called them by his side and said, "I'm proud that I had you as my students. You both stood head and shoulders above all the others, and no doubt you've a bright future ahead of you. I feel there's

nothing more for you to learn here, and you should now go back to your parents."

Loknath and Sivadas sought the guru's blessings and said politely, "O sage, thanks to you we're well-versed in many things and we've acquired unusual powers, too. If anyone were to harm us, we may even curse them. But, we don't know how to revoke a curse once it is administered. Don't you think we should also learn the power to take back curses? It would be better if you could teach us that *mantra* as well. That'd be in the interests of everybody."

Vidyanath thought for a while and said, "All right, you may remain in the ashram for one more month." After two weeks, the sage called Sivadas and told him, "If you wish to learn the power to take back a curse, you'll have to subject yourself to still more rigorous discipline, which anybody and everybody is not capable of. I don't think Loknath can do it. I shall teach that *mantra* only to you."

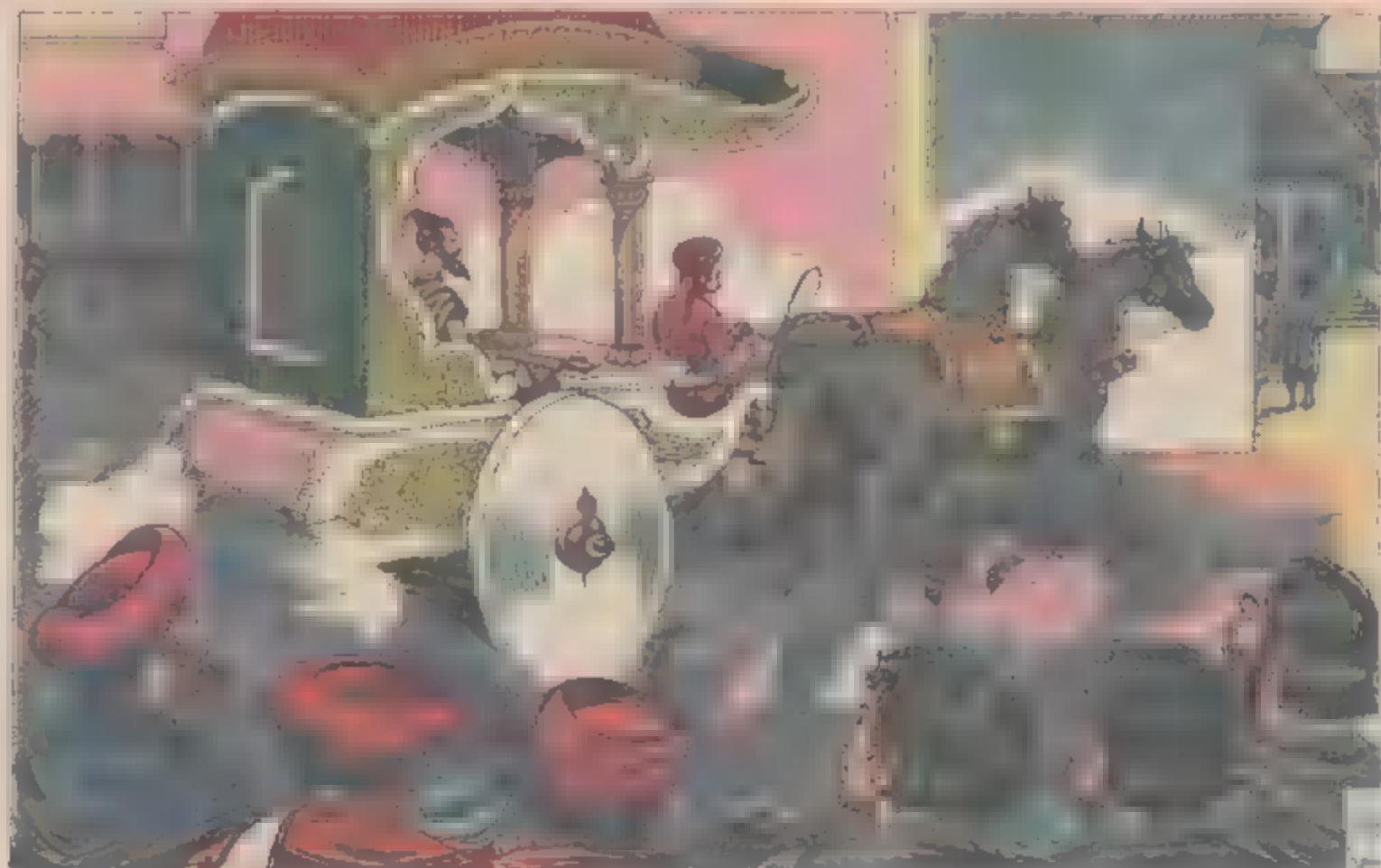
Sivadas felt elated. He thought high of himself, being certified by the guru that he was more intelligent than Loknath. Loknath was

left to wonder why he had been singled out by the sage and denied the privilege of learning that *mantra*. Meanwhile, the sage called him and said, "Loknath, there's no point in your staying here any longer and wasting your time. You may return home. But you may be careful and remember that you cannot take back ■ curse. So, don't give yourself any opportunity to administer a curse on anybody." Loknath accepted the guru's advice and returned to his village.

Sivadas stayed in the ashram for some more days, learning all that he wished to know as how to take back ■ curse. He then took

leave of his guru and went back to his village. Some five years went by. One day Rudrasen, the king of that region, sought an audience with Vidyanath and sent two of his ministers with a chariot to fetch him to the palace. Vidyanath went with them.

The king received him with all courtesies and in all obeisance. "I wanted your advice, O sage, on an important matter; that's why I made you travel all the way from your ashram," said the king. "I wish to appoint someone as the Rajguru, and I'm looking for ■ suitable person. He should be clever, mature, and ■ intellectual. You may be able to recom-



mend one of your own disciples. I've heard a lot about Loknath and Sivadas. Would you recommend one of them? I'm told Sivadas has widely travelled and has become a powerful person. It appears he instils fear in everybody, especially wicked people, who are afraid of him and easily turn good-natured when they come under his influence. He has a large following and they are all known as 'Dasasena' who go after the evil and the wicked and bring them before their master. And fearing his curse, they lose no time in reforming themselves. This is what people tell me."

"Is that so?" the sage expressed surprise. "And what do they say about Loknath?"

"He's not that popular or influential," the king revealed. "He doesn't have much of a following, too. Of course, he does attract people to his discourses which guide them along the right path. I believe, people often eagerly await his arrival to listen to his speeches. They do so in rapt attention and go back satisfied and determined to lead a correct life. But nobody has reported about his possessing any miraculous powers."

"My advice would be," said Vidyanath after some careful thought, "to choose Loknath as Rajguru. He has all the qualities and qualifications. He deserves the position, and he'll do good to the land." And before long, Loknath was appointed Rajguru.

The vampire concluded the story there and turned to Vikramaditya. "O king! You would have noticed that Vidyanath right from the beginning was treating his two disciples differently. A guru ought not to discriminate between his students, don't you think so? He taught Sivadas the method to take back a curse. He sent away Loknath telling him that he was not capable of the rigors needed for learning the *mantra*. However, in the matter of a choice of the Rajguru, the sage showed partiality towards Loknath. Don't you think the sage was contradicting himself? Remember my warning : if you don't give proper answers, your head will be blown to pieces."

King Vikramaditya did not have to think for long. "People are all of different character and standard. They have their own ways of approaching things and

doing them. Some ■ eager to earn ■ name and fame. Some others prefer to lead a quiet life without publicising their powers or achievements. Sivadas belonged to the first category. On the contrary, Loknath never revealed his accomplishments. People were afraid of Sivadas; but Loknath endeared himself to the people, who flocked to listen to his discourses. Sivadas was capable of cursing someone and also taking back that curse. Loknath did not have that power. We may remember that it is only when someone gets angry that he administers ■ curse. When his anger subsides, he may also be struck with remorse and decide to take back the curse. Sivadas was one who would get angry at the slightest excuse. As Loknath did not have the power

to take back ■ curse, he saw to it that he had no occasion to administer one! He never got angry with anyone. Instead, he was kind to everyone. Vidyanath was aware of these basic differences between his two students. That's why he recommended Loknath to King Rudrasen. The guru was never partial to his students. He knew the nature of Sivadas, who was easily given to anger. That's why he taught him the *mantra* to take back ■ curse. If he had not done so, Sivadas would have turned cruel."

The vampire knew that Vikramaditya had outwitted him once again. He gave him the slip and flew back to the ancient tree, taking the corpse along with him. The king drew his sword and went after the vampire.



THE KING'S DOUBT

The king of Mangalapuri had a strange doubt. Does man really need education? As he sat in his court, he sought an explanation from everybody.

The royal pundit said, education would fetch a high status and thereby enable the person to acquire a lot of wealth. The Chief Minister was of the view that one could earn a name and fame by pursuing education. The court poet opined that an educated person would command respect from everybody. The official priest said education would make everybody pious and peace-loving.

Somehow, the king was not satisfied with any of these explanations. In fact, one look at his face told everybody that he was still angry. It was then that the court jester rose from his seat. "O king, I know the correct explanation, but you might get angry with me if I were to spell it out!"

"Don't be afraid," the king assured him. "Whatever you know, please tell me. I won't be angry with you," he prompted the jester.

"You need education so that you would not have doubts like this!" the jester gave his answer. "Also, you would not torment others with such unnecessary, nonsensical questions!"

There was a loud laughter from all corners of the court. The king took an extra minute to grasp the point made by the jester, but soon laughed along with the others.



CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT - 41



BIRDS AND ANIMALS OF INDIA

EAGLE

One of the largest-sized birds, the eagle belongs to the family Accipitridae. It has a wingspan of nearly 6 feet (2m) and is dark brown in colour. A bird of prey, it is endowed with telescopic vision, enabling it to spot its victim from a distance and swoop down on it with extreme accuracy. It has sharp talons and a beak. It can fly to heights where many other birds cannot reach. They build their nests on high mountain cliffs and rocks. These superior qualities have prompted people to refer to the eagle as the 'king of birds'.

The eagle has a special place in Hindu mythology. The eagle Garuda is the vahana or mount of Lord Vishnu. An entire purana is devoted to Garuda, who was born to Vinata. As you may know, Vinata and twelve other daughters of Daksha Prajapati—he had sixty in all—were married to sage Kashyapa, who is regarded as the progenitor of all creatures in the world. Garuda went to Lord Indra to ask for some nectar for his mother's sister, Kadru, the mother of all snakes; to stop her from treating Vinata as a slave. Indra refused, but Garuda managed to get hold of a small quantity. Indra then fought with him but was defeated by Garuda. Asked what his wish was, Garuda said he would like to serve Vishnu. The gods, led by Indra, then prayed to Him and Vishnu accepted him as his mount.

Some of the other famous eagles are Jatayu, Sampati, Suparna, and Aruna.

A FILM ARTISTE SINCE TWO

"Action!" called out the director of the Malayalam movie "Kilukanpetti" (toy-rattler), and 5-year-old Chiku, who was supposed to be weeping in the sequence, began shedding copious tears in front of the camera. No, she did not have to use any glycerine; the tears came automatically—it was as if she was living the role—and wonder of wonders, they stopped at the press of a switch as it were, when the director called out a second time "Cut!"

Chiku is the role name of Baby Shyamlee in that movie under production. Of course, you will all remember that she won the Best Child Artiste Award last year for her brilliant performance in the Tamil film *Anjali*. She acts in Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu films. In the latest Malayalam movie, she is clubbed with such veterans as Suchitra Krishnamurthi and Jayaram. Chiku is pictured ■ a precocious, sometimes mischievous, child.

Shyamlee is so busy with call-sheets and shooting schedules—she is acting in not less than 20 films—that she has to complete her work in "Kilukanpetti" in two sessions.

Isn't that too much for ■ mere 5-year-old? you may ask. Yes, but she goes about it this way: it is her father, A.S.Babu, who listens to the director's instructions and dialogues. He repeats them to Shyamlee over a number of



days, trains her how to stand, walk, look, and even cry! She picks up the cues quite easily and is able to imitate just as she is expected to, in front of the camera. The director has only to give her some final touches. Maniratnam had this to say of her: "She is natural; why, she is ■ born actress!" Coming ■ it does from a well-known director (*Anjali*), we now know how Shyamlee was selected for that prestigious Award. Mr. Babu accompanies her to the sets, and is always with her. He feeds her, dresses her, and helps in her make-up.

On an average, Shyamlee goes for shooting on 20 days in a month. The other ten days she attends school. You can often hear her crying (real!) "I want to go to school (every day) and study!"

DO YOU KNOW?

1. Where would you see the 'Temple of Heaven'?
2. Where is the world's oldest known zoo?
3. An Italian, born in 1452, became famous as an artist, musician, mathematician, and inventor. Who was he?
4. When and where was the first crossword puzzle published?
5. The American President, Abraham Lincoln, is believed to have grown a beard after he received a letter from a girl. Who was she?
6. The next Olympic Games will be held in Barcelona, Spain, in July. When was the first Olympiad held? When and where was the first modern Olympic Games held?
7. What does the word 'Karate' exactly mean?
8. Whose court did the Greek traveller Megasthenes visit in India?
9. Gandhiji often referred to his 'political Guru'. Who was he?
10. The month 'July' is named after Julius Caesar. Which month is called after his nephew?
11. Who was Akbar's revenue minister?
12. Who is the author of "Raghuvamsa"?
13. The mouse is revered as the 'mount' or *vahana* of Vighneshwara or Ganesha. In a temple in India, rats are specially revered, fed, and protected. Which temple?
14. To which island was Napoleen first exiled?
15. The flag of a nation has both an eagle and a snake. Which country?

ANSWERS

1. Beijing, China.
2. At Schonbrunn, in Vienna, Austria. It was built in 1752.
3. Leonardo da Vinci.
4. In the "New York World", on December 21, 1913. It was made by Arthur Winn.
5. Grace Bedell.
6. In 776 B.C. in Olympia, Greece. Modern Olympics first took place in Athens, Greece, in 1896.
7. Empty hand.
8. Chandragupta Maurya.
9. Gopalkrishna Gokhale.
10. Augustus—Augustus Caesar.
11. Todar Mal.
12. Kalidasa.
13. Kamimata, in Rajasthan.
14. Elba.
15. Mexico.



Two-mile

Some people are in the habit of writing long letters to their friends, and relatives, too. But nobody will be able to beat 20-year-old Rajendra Chand Thakuri, of Nepal. He wrote a letter to his friend in India; it ran into—hold your breath—10,315 pages! The 'letter' weighed 42 kg. The Nepali student calculated that if the 5,153 sheets were to be placed end to end, they might stretch to 3 km (2 miles). His friend received the letter in the New Year, and February found him still reading it!

NEWS FLASH

A Story ■ Survival

People manning the river cattle station in a desolate region of northwestern Australia got the surprise of their life when 35 Chinese men and women made their appearance on January 16. These teachers and students said their boat had wrecked and they had trekked through dense bush. The wreck was later found at Swift Bay on the Timor Sea, some 200 km from the cattle station. It was a wonder how they survived. First they killed a 3m long crocodile and ate a portion and dried the rest for later use. They also ate snakes, and fish there was plenty. One day, they chased a goanna—a large lizard—up a tree. They, however, spared the birds they came across on the way. They also avoided walking during the day, in the scorching sun. "Quite tough in a way that we are not," was the comment of the owner of the cattle station.



THE MINISTER OF MANDI

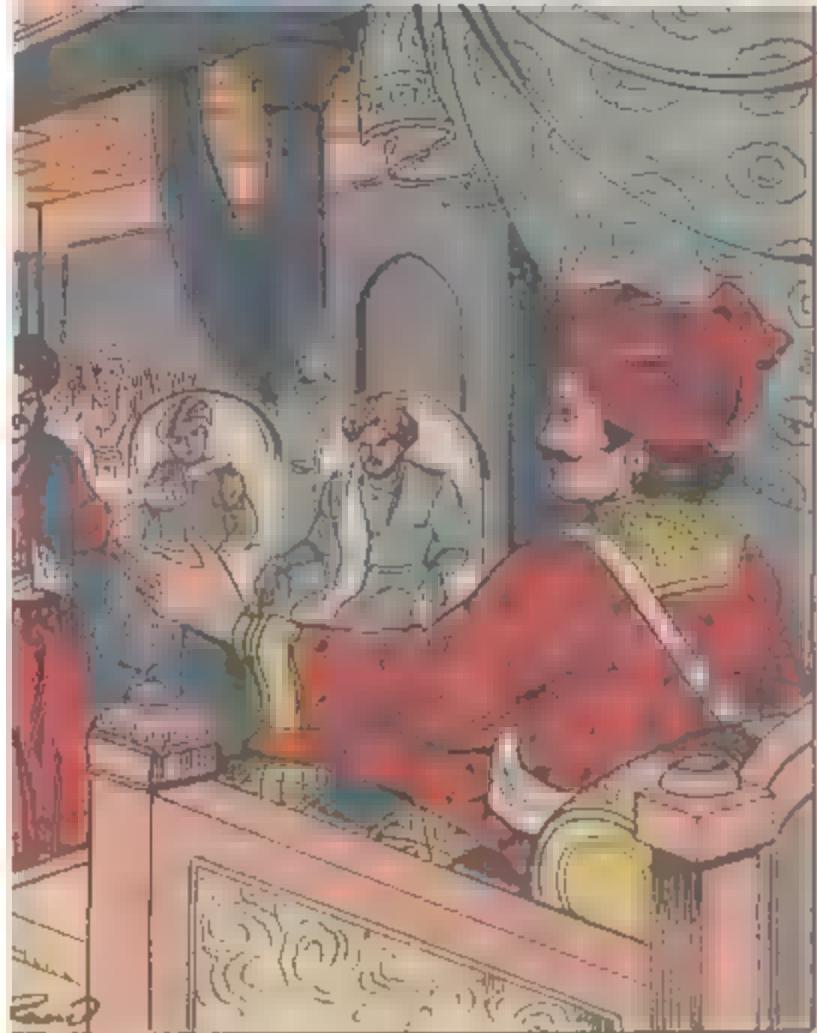


Bir Bahadur was the Minister of Mandi. He served the Raja faithfully and the Raja was so happy with Bir Bahadur that he entrusted to him a major part of the administration. The minister carried out everything to the satisfaction of the Raja. No wonder, when the Raja thought of building a new palace, he gave the entire responsibility to Bir Bahadur.

The Minister went about the whole exercise very methodically and meticulously supervised the

construction work once it started. Hundreds of labourers were engaged, after the Minister himself had checked and tested their skill and efficiency. He paid special attention when he selected the supervisors for each job. Somehow or other, he was unable to get hold of a good carpenter and a blacksmith from within the kingdom.

Bir Bahadur went to the Raja with a suggestion. If he permitted him, he would himself go to the neighbouring states and, with the



help of the friendly rulers there, secure the services of the best carpenter and blacksmith. After all, they were to be associated with a prestigious project and they could expect rewards, besides their regular remuneration, from the Raja of Mandi, who was well known for his generosity. The Raja agreed to his proposal and asked him to go ahead—though he knew that the mission might keep Bir Bahadur away from the kingdom for several days together. The minister made all arrangements for the administration to go smoothly in his absence and left on a tour of

the neighbouring states, from where he sent his periodical reports to the Raja.

One day, instead of a report through a messenger, there came Ram Singh, carrying a letter from Bir Bahadur. He was ushered into the presence of the Raja. The letter stated that Ram Singh had been recommended to him ■ the best carpenter in Bilaspur, and as there ■ no major work to keep him busy in his own state, the ruler of Bilaspur had agreed to lend his services to Mandi for a period of one year. He could, therefore, be engaged straight away.

The Raja of Mandi was very happy that his minister could find ■ very suitable person without ■ long search and that the work in Mandi need not be held up for want of a capable carpenter. The Raja found from his conversation with Ram Singh that he was an expert in preparing carved doors and windows and all types of wooden decorations, for various rooms in the new palace. The Raja arranged for his accommodation and other facilities, so that Ram Singh could begin his work immediately.

A few weeks later came Lakhan Singh from Dholpur, again with a letter from Bir Bahadur, saying he had recruited the most sought-after blacksmith from that state. In fact, he was busily engaged in Dholpur which was getting ready for the prince's wedding. Still, the king was willing to spare the services of Lakhan Singh because of the friendly ties Dholpur had maintained with Mandi. Besides, the king did not wish to lag behind Bilaspur in obliging Mandi, when he heard that the ruler had already sent the best carpenter in Bilaspur to Mandi. Bir Bahadur also added that he was utilising

the opportunity to visit some other rulers to cement Mandi's relations with them, so that in [redacted] the necessity arose, Mandi could seek their help in the construction of the palace.

The Raja marvelled at his minister's diplomacy. Of course, he engaged Lakhan Singh right-away and arranged for his accommodation. As both the carpenter and blacksmith had been recommended by their respective rulers, and as the Raja felt it should be easy for his minister to oversee their work every now and then, he found them houses close to where Bir Bahadur himself was staying. Ram Singh and Lakhan





Singh soon settled down and started work in right earnest. They were very happy with the facilities extended to them; and there was enough and more of materials, like wood and metal sheets and rods to work with.

Soon Bir Bahadur returned from his visits and reported his successes to the Raja, who was all praise for him. He also told Bir Bahadur how he had settled Ram Singh and Lakhon Singh. Bir Bahadur reached his own house rather late in the evening and had no time to look up the carpenter and the blacksmith and find out what progress they had made in

their respective jobs.

As he was rather tired, Bir Bahadur fell asleep the moment he went to bed and slept peacefully for some time. Then he suddenly woke up on hearing a loud noise from one side of his house. He listened carefully and realised that it was the carpenter at work. The time was around midnight. He tried to go back to sleep, but the hammerings continued for some time. Soon he fell asleep again, only to be woken up by some other kind of noise. When he had listened to it for ■ while, he knew it was from the house given to the blacksmith on the other side of his house. Anyway, when he woke up in the morning, Bir Bahadur felt as if he had not slept at all.

After he got ready for the court, he went in search of the carpenter, who gave him ■ account of all the work he had turned out since his arrival in Mandi. Bir Bahadur was quite satisfied with his workmanship and found that the work was progressing according to the schedule he had in mind. Yet, he could not help himself from asking Ram Singh, "Do you have to work ■ the night, too?"

"Sir, I'm not even half-way through my work," said Ram Singh, apologetically. "That's why I'm working in the night. Please don't worry, I shall complete my part of the work as quick as possible," he added, wondering whether the minister had any doubt about his capacity.

Bir Bahadur also felt that he should not put any restrictions on the carpenter. After all, the sooner the work on the palace was completed, he would get more time to devote to administration.

On his way to the court, he also dropped in at the blacksmith's.

"Why should you work at night?" he asked Lakhan Singh.

"Sir," the blacksmith said very politely, "I'm away from my wife and children, and there's no diversion at night. And sometimes I don't get any sleep at all. So, to kill time, I pick up my tools and get busy with my work. If I can complete the job soon, I can return home early and be with my family again. Besides, there's a lot of work in Dholpur waiting for me."

Bir Bahadur took pity on the man. He could imagine how homesick Lakhan Singh might be. "All right, but take care of your health," he told the black-





smith condescendingly, before proceeding to the court.

The hammerings continued almost every night, much to the discomfort of Bir Bahadur. Some days, he would close all windows and try to get some sleep, but sleep would elude him and he would remain tossing in the bed till he heard the cock ushering in the dawn.

He did not want to reveal the real reason, but one day he called both Ram Singh and Lakhan Singh and said, "I feel you should change your residences."

The carpenter and the blacksmith looked at each other as if

they could not understand what exactly the minister was trying to tell them. They merely went back to their houses wondering whether the houses had to be given to someone else who might be arriving from some other state. But, then, they were taken to these very houses on the orders of the Raja. Would it be advisable then to move out without another order from the Raja himself? They decided to wait and watch for a few days.

Exactly a week later, the minister called them again. "I shall be away for three days; I hope you will change your residence by the time I return." They merely nodded and went away.

Three days later, Bir Bahadur was back in Mandi. As he was stepping out to go to the court, he found Ram Singh and Lakhan Singh waiting for him outside. "Sir, we have changed houses just as you wished."

"Oh, that's good," remarked Bir Bahadur. The carpenter and the blacksmith did not hear the loud sigh of relief that came from the minister. "I hope the work is progressing?"

"Yes, Sir," the two of them said almost in unison. They

bowed low as Bir Bahadur went his way. That night, he tucked himself in bed early and went to sleep. Sleep he did, but only for a little while. He woke up to the noise of hammerings in the dead of night. He was quite angry with Ram Singh and Lakhan Singh, though he remembered he had himself recruited them.

Early morning he sent for them. When they came, he asked them, "Didn't you tell me you both had shifted?"

"Yes, Sir," Ram Singh replied for Lakhan Singh ■ well, "I moved into his house, and he into mine. We hope that's what you wanted. Isn't that so?"

Bir Bahadur was at a loss to find a suitable answer to Ram Singh's question. For once he realised his diplomacy had failed him in

dealing with a carpenter and ■ blacksmith. But he ■ diplomatic enough not to pursue the matter further and decided to think up some other strategy to find a solution to his problem. "Yes, Ram Singh, that's what I had thought of. You both may go now." He sent them back to their houses.

When he met the Raja later in the court, Bir Bahadur broached the subject with him. "Your Majesty, the work on the palace will soon reach the final stages, and it'll be better if I stay closer to the place so that I'll have more time to supervise the work going on there."

The Raja of Mandi knew that he would not get ■ more sincere, conscientious minister even if he were to comb the entire state. He readily agreed to Bir Bahadur's proposition.





Centenarian Cricketer

India has the distinction of having the oldest living international cricketer. Prof. Dinkar Balwant Deodhar turned a hundred on January 14. His debut in first class cricket was when he played for Hindus against Parsees at Bombay in 1911-12. His last first class match ■ for Maharashtra against the Rest of India at Pune in 1947-48. He was in the India team that toured Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) in 1930-31. He retired from cricket when he was 54. He played tennis in his 70s, and was cycling in Pune city in his 80s!

WORLD OF RECORDS

One Step Away

When Bhuvaneswari Kumari (31) of Alwar, Rajasthan, India, won the National Squash Championship early in January, she was winning it the 16th time in a row since 1977. She was also *equalling* the world record held by Australia's Heather Pamela Mckay (nee Blundell) who had won the British open women's title in squash for 16 continuous years from 1961, and that finds ■ place in the 1992 edition of the Guinness Book of Records. If the Alwar princess adds one more victory in the Nationals, Guinness will have to credit India with a new record.





VEER HANUMAN

18

(Rama is carried away by Hanuman's account of his meeting with Sita and his description of her confinement in Lanka. He is now impatient to reach Lanka, defeat Ravana, and rescue Sita. Together with Lakshmana, Sugriva, Hanuman, Angada, and others, he plans a strategy to cross over to Lanka. The Vanara army gets ready for the long march. Meanwhile, Ravana is smitten with shame. He fears something worse may happen.)

The moment Rama heard from Hanuman where Sita had been confined in Lanka, he became anxious to reach there as fast as possible. When Hanuman told him that she was being guarded by demonesses, Rama was distressed very much. He was eager to know from Hanuman more about his meeting and

conversation with Sita. Hanuman then told him how she had revealed to him the story of the crow, which till then only she and Rama knew.

"After describing the incident," continued Hanuman, "Sitadevi told me that she expected such a strong husband of hers to rescue her soon. She

DECISION TO ATTACK LANKA



suffering. I assured her that both of you would go there soon and bring her back. It was then that she gave me that ornament she was wearing on her head, and commanded me to convey her regards to you both. Before I came away, I once again assured her that you and Lakshmana and King Sugriva would lead [redacted] army and rescue her."

Rama felt somewhat at peace when he heard all this from Hanuman. He stood up and embraced Hanuman. "It was a great feat that you did, Hanuman! You had no difficulty in crossing that vast ocean, which was something all the others hesitated to attempt. Maybe Vayu, the god of Wind, or Garuda would have succeeded if they had tried. It is not an easy joke to come back from Lanka alive. In fact, you even searched for Sita, managed to meet her, and then confronted the demons and killed many of them. Why, you went to the extent of destroying the city of Lanka. Who else is capable of all these hazardous adventures? My entire dynasty is indebted to you, O Hanuman! I don't know how we will repay that debt." Rama once again held

said she [redacted] every confidence that he would go there fully armed to fight Ravana and free her from him. She even said it would be enough if Lakshmana was sent to rescue her, and hoped that her sufferings would soon come to [redacted] end. She was waiting for that piece of good news. She felt that it was her past sin that prevented Rama and Lakshmana from knowing that she had been kidnapped and kept in confinement in Lanka. I then told Sitadevi that both of you were full of memories of her and consoled her that there would soon be an end to her sorrow and

Hanuman in ■ long embrace.

Suddenly he remembered. "You had managed to cross the vast ocean? How will we do that?"

Hanuman turned to Sugriva for an answer. "That should not be difficult, O lord," said Sugriva in a comforting tone. "We shall build a dam across the ■ so that we and our army ■ proceed to Lanka and engage Ravana and other demons in fight, kill them, and rescue Sita. So, let's plan how we shall put up such a dam."

"That's a good idea, Sugriva," said Rama. "However, there's something we ought to know before hand. We may reach Lanka, all right, but how do we know what kind of fortifications it has, how it is guarded. We've to consider all these aspects before we get there. Perhaps Hanuman can enlighten us on these points."

Hanuman then gave them an account of the city of Lanka as much as he had seen and known it. "It's a huge city. Thousands of demons are living there with all comforts and facilities. Of course, Ravana is their leader. He has an army comprising infantry, cavalry and several charioteers, besides soldiers on



elephants. Lanka is strongly guarded all round, and nobody can penetrate. Enemies will find it impossible to get past these guards, who are ever watchful of all possible movements from intruders. They will be awestruck by the arrangements. If the fortifications are such, you can very well imagine what will be the state of affairs inside the city. Most of the palaces are gold-plated. The doors and windows are studded with precious stones. Everything has ■ grandeur about it. The entire city is fenced all around. Beyond the fence is a moat full of crocodiles.



Mainthan, Dwatiyan, Jambavan, Neelan, and other warriors, we should also be able to offer resistance if our entry is hindered. Why should we hesitate to make an attempt to reach Lanka? Let's consider an auspicious day and hour to start with our soldiers. We should not delay our departure, lest we don't find Sitadevi alive. Even now she's half-dead."

"What Hanuman said is true," observed Rama. "We must start immediately. I think the time is propitious now. Sugriva, you may make all arrangements for our departure."

Sugriva then addressed his commanders. "We must take our army through areas where food will be available in plenty. One soldier should lead us to find out whether we would encounter any enemy on the way. We must send our spies ahead to search for enemy spies. This can be done by flying and viewing from above."

Neelan was listening to all these directions. He then divided the Vanara soldiers accordingly. When he saw the divisions led by a commander each, Rama was glad and satisfied. He himself walked in front of everybody.

All gates can close and open automatically. I think Ravana has very meticulously planned the city. There may not be any threat to the city, but the guards and the army are always on the alert. The city is on top of the Trikuta mountain. We've to find a way to reach this mountain. I was, however, able to enter the city, destroy it partially, and kill several demons. Right now, Lanka will not be so impregnable. We may be able to make our entry without much difficulty. Once we cross the ocean, we would be almost at the gates of Lanka. With the help of Angada,

The division in the fore had the powerful Gajan and the super-Kavayan. The cleverest of them all, Rishabhadran, was on the right hand side looking after its secure movement. Hanuman walked on the right of Rama. Lakshmana and Angada were behind them.

The army moved southward. The Vanaras were jubilant and they did not spare any fruit that they could grab on the way. Neither Rama nor Hanuman checked them. After all, the soldiers had to be kept happy and satisfied so that they would have all enthusiasm to fight later.

The Vanara army, from above, looked like a moving sea of heads. They crossed mountains and rivers, traversed through forests and jungles and reached the Mahendru mountain where they rested. Rama climbed the mountain and took a look around. The soldiers had by then put up little huts for Rama, Lakshmana, and Sugriva to rest. "Let's rest here," said Rama. "We may take some time to cross the sea. We have to think of a method for doing so. But please ensure that none of the soldiers goes back to Kishkindya. The



enemy may strike any moment," he cautioned them.

The Vanara army divided itself into three. They were contemplating on the vastness of the sea and what sort of encounters from sea monsters they might meet while they crossed the sea. They were really apprehensive of the adventure.

Meanwhile, in Lanka, Ravana was pulling up everybody. He had met with the first ever defeat in his life! "It was an insult to everybody, that someone could succeed in gaining entry into the city which was once considered most impregnable. And who was



that? A mere monkey! And he had even left Lanka in ruins. The monkey had even managed to reach Sita and speak with her. Several palaces had been burned down; he had killed many demons. It's a challenge to our race. Maybe, somebody is planning to attack us. We've to be well-guarded."

In fact, his own spies had already informed Ravana that an army of monkeys was plotting to attack Lanka. Somehow or other they would manage to reach the city and engage the demons in a battle. So, Ravana thought of strategies to defeat

the enemy.

The demons were surprised when they found Ravana upset. Ravana, who had conquered all the three worlds, was now jittery over the prospect of an attack by monkeys. But, then, they already knew how much havoc one single monkey could cause. What would be their fate if an army of monkeys were to invade Lanka?

"You shouldn't have any worry," the demons tried to reassure Ravana. "Nobody else has that much strength ■ we have. Why, they would all disintegrate at the very mention of your name."

Some demons began recalling Ravana's exploits and victories. Didn't he defeat Kubera? Didn't he raise the Kailas mountain and earn praise from Lord Siva? Weren't the kings on the earth already paying obeisance to him? Was there anyone left on earth to face Ravana? So, he need not be afraid of anybody, the least of all monkeys. The demons tried to give him courage. In fact, Ravana's son, Indrajit, alone was enough to meet any army that might attack Lanka. "O Lord!





Nobody, not the Devas nor the Asuras or the Gandharvas, is able to withstand your might. Then why worry about these monkeys? One solitary monkey might have managed to cause havoc to our gardens and palaces. And that happened because we did not prevent him at the proper time. He was fortunate

enough to escape our wrath. He won't succeed ■ second time. Give us the orders, we shall go and destroy all the monkeys on the earth."

Ravana listened to all this bravado, but somehow he had the premonition that they were in for something terrible.

— To continue

Teacher : Who's a vegetarian?

Bright boy : Sir, ■ horse doctor.

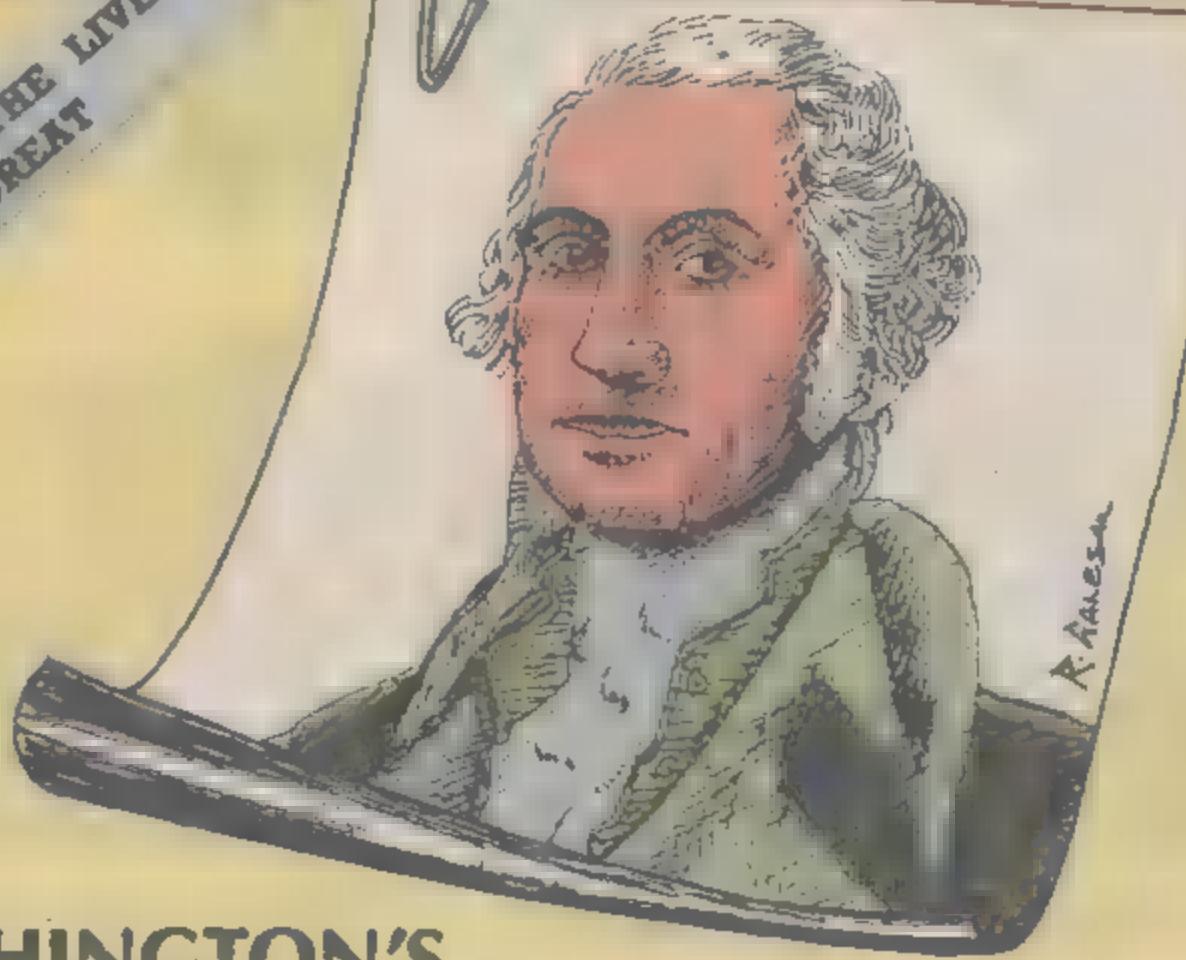
Teacher : That's a veterinarian.

Bright boy : Ah! I know of one.

Teacher : Who's he?

Bright boy : He was once ■ soldier
(veteran)





WASHINGTON'S WISH

Not long ago we read how the Presidents of the U.S.A. and the former U.S.S.R. held ■ historic meeting in Moscow and decided to effect a 30% cut in their nuclear stockpile. And very recently ■ heard the Russian President appealing to the U.S. leader to effect further cuts in the arms held by the two countries.

Here is an interesting incident from the life of George Washington, the very first President of the U.S.A. He ■ the son of a very ordinary farmer of Virginia. He led the American settlers to rise against British imperialism. As commander-in-chief, he found his soldiers tired and hungry after the two-year War of Independence, but he inspired them to victory.

He was chosen to be the Chairman of the committee formed to draft a Constitution for the independent nation.

During the deliberations, one of the members moved ■ resolution that America should not maintain ■ permanent army of more than 5,000 soldiers. Washington was not very happy over this clause, but ■ Chairman, he did not wish to oppose it. However, he suggested an amendment. "You may add that no country desirous of attacking America should send an army of more than 3,000 soldiers!" Get the point?

On the people accepting the Constitution, Washington was made the President of the United States of America.



TALES FROM MANY LANDS (KOREA)

Iron Boots And His Friends

Once a farmer was returning from the fields. It was dusk and he was rushing home. Suddenly he heard the cries of a baby. With some difficulty he reached where the cries came from. To his surprise he found a newborn babe. He took the baby in his arms and began fondling it. The child stopped crying. He waited for sometime for someone to come and claim the babe. Nobody came, and he realised that it was an abandoned child. So, he took it home.

The farmer, who was left childless by his wife before her death during an epidemic, was happy that he would now have someone to look after and when he—it was a male baby—grew up, there would be somebody to look after him in his old age. He showered all his affection and love on the child. The farmer noticed something strange in him even in the early days. He would not drink any milk, but ate rice and curries with relish. As he grew up, he showed early signs of

adulthood maturity.

He would take the baby with him when he went to the fields and he would play around till his foster-father was ready to go home. Soon the child was able to walk and run. One day, ■ they were returning home, the boy asked his father for ■ wheelbarrow. The farmer made a small toy wheelbarrow for him and the boy would pull it to and fro the fields. A year later, the boy wanted a slightly bigger wheelbarrow. Now, the farmer made one of wood. As he grew taller, the boy demanded a still bigger wheelbarrow, and this time the farmer made one of iron.

"You'll find it hard to pull, son," cautioned the farmer.

"But, father, I need something strong; so that I can bring wooden logs from the mountains," said the boy, who had by then grown strong and sturdy. Everyday he would go to the mountain-side—instead of the fields along with his foster-father—and bring logs of wood of various sizes.

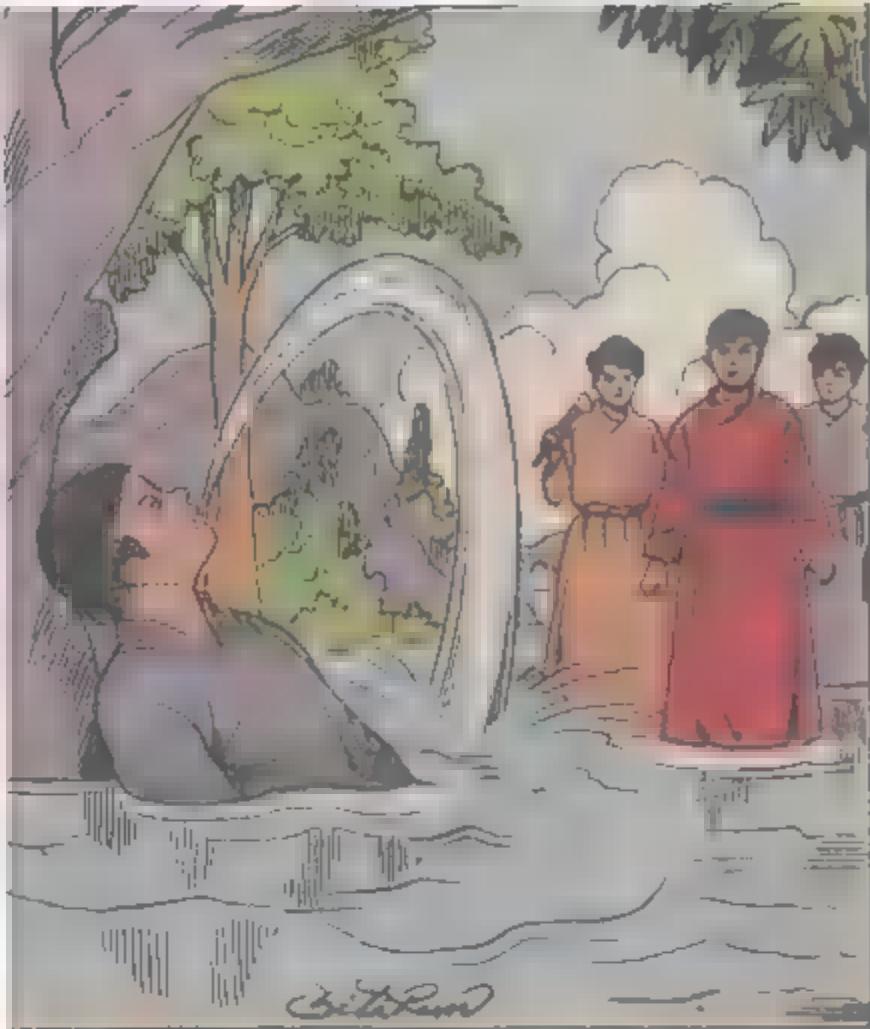
Before the farmer knew it, the boy had made a little log cabin for himself in the courtyard. By now, he would wear only iron



Ota Ram

boots and so came to be familiarly called IRON BOOTS. One day, he started on a long journey. He reached a mountain where he took rest under a tree. He could not believe his eyes when, yonder in a field, he saw a huge tree rising from the ground and going down, every now and then. His curiosity took him near the tree where he found a youngster, like him, fast asleep. It was his loud snore that was uprooting the tree and making it sway in the air! 'He must be ■ very strong person,' thought Iron Boots.

"Hey, mister!" he called to the youth. There was no response.



Citizen

He was still fast asleep. Iron Boots then hit him on the nose. The young man got up, yawned, and scratched his head as if nothing had happened. "Can we be friends?" Iron Boots suggested.

"Oh! Ho!" said NOSE BLOWER casually. (That was the name thought of by Iron Boots for his newfound friend.) "But let's decide who is stronger," demanded Nose Blower.

The two wrestled for some time. No doubt, it was Nose Blower who won. So, he became senior to Iron Boots. The two

started on their journey together. They reached a mountain which, strangely, was shaking. They cautiously approached and, what else did they find than a youngster, like them, trying to tilt the mountain with a long spade! He must be an extraordinary fellow, thought Iron Boots and Nose Blower. "Let's befriend him," they told each other. However, they wanted to test his strength, and went and sat on the spade. The youth was not able to lift the spade. So, they made him their younger brother.

Now, people often say three won't make company, but these three soon became fast friends. As Iron Boots had then started addressing his friend as Nose Blower, the two decided to call the junior SPADE SHAKER. The three proceeded on their journey, and soon came to a river in which the water appeared all muddy. Why should it be so, when it had not rained the previous night? they thought. They walked upstream to find the reason and, to their surprise, found a youth, like them, who had turned his nostrils and mouth like a fountain. Water was gushing from his nose and

mouth, and the force was dirtying the water in the river. They wanted to test him and went and shook his neck. Lo and behold! Water came out as if there was a dam burst, and the three were washed away in the flood. They saved themselves from drowning and went and apologised to the youngster. They requested WATERFALL to join their company.

All four of them resumed their journey. By nightfall they were dead tired. Soon they came upon a small house, and decided to seek shelter there for the night. An old woman answered to their knock on the door. "We're tired and hungry. Could we get some food here?" they asked the woman politely.

"Come in, come in! You're all welcome," greeted the old woman. "Let me see what I can give you." Soon she got up a sumptuous meal for them. There was rice and a meat dish to go with it. When they tasted the curry, they suspected it was no ordinary meat. Could it be human flesh? They ate the rice with the gravy, thanked the woman, and retired to their room. They decided to keep



awake, lest something happened to them. When everything was quiet, they could listen to this conversation outside.

"Mother, we can smell humans inside. How many did you get?"

"Four of them, and they all appear to be of some tasty kind. How many did you manage?"

"I could only get a couple of deer. My three brothers did not get even that."

"What shall we eat first—the deer or the humans?"

"They must be asleep now. We shall fry them first."

The four friends now did not



have any doubt. The woman and her four sons must be really tigers in human form. They remained in their room in stony silence. Suddenly they found the floor warm; it was getting heated up. So, the tigers must have raised a fire beneath their room to fry them?

Nose Blower ■■■ up with ■ solution. "Don't worry, I shall take care of it." He then blew his nose and mouth and kept the room as cool as possible. Some time later, the tiger brothers slowly opened the door and peeped in. They found their guests still alive. So they had to

contend with frying the deer for their supper.

When morning came and they got ready to go, the woman stopped them. "All four of you must compete with my sons in cutting wood. All of you go to the mountain, and cut wood. My sons will collect the logs and arrange them according to their size. Whoever gets defeated in the competition will have to die."

The four friends climbed the trees and began to cut wood. As the logs and branches were thrown down, the woman's sons collected them. They were taking ■ lot of time to do so. It was almost certain that they would get defeated. The woman was worried. "All right, now you change positions. My sons will climb the trees and cut wood. You come down and collect them."

The friends found there were not enough logs falling down for them to collect. In fact, they had to idle away a lot of time. The woman became jittery. She set fire to the logs collected by the four friends, who were then standing on the pile. When the fire rose, the four sons cried out in joy. They climbed down the

trees and stood in a circle around the pile of wood shouting in victory.

The friends never had imagined that the man would cheat them. Waterfall came to their rescue. In no time, water began to spout from his mouth and nose and the woman and her sons were caught in the flood. Once water touched them, they assumed the shape of tigers and they began to swim, all the while crying out, "Please have mercy on us! We're sorry we troubled you and tried to harm you!"

The four brave youngsters

did not pay any heed to their cries. Instead, Nose Blower blew so strongly that the water began to freeze, and the tigers were now unable to swim and were frozen to death. Iron Boots ran up and down the frozen water in glee, while Spade Shaker broke the ice all over, and the place soon looked like the mountain-side. There was no sign of any flood, nor of the five tigers.

"It's time for us to return home!" said the four friends together, and they went back the way they came.

—Keyar



■ CHANGE SETS IN

Manikyam was once caught red-handed while accepting a bribe and was sentenced to undergo imprisonment and hard labour. But instead of the jail, he was sent to an institute for mentally retarded and handicapped children. Their care was given over to the prisoners sent there.

One day, sage-like Sadanand came to the institute and stayed there for ten days, when he tended the children as they were his own. "You're really a great person!" commented Manikyam. "Tell me, is ■ your fate also to look after these abnormal children? I had no other alternative, but I do feel ashamed of my work here."

"Ashamed, did you say?" the sage was horrified. "Why should you feel ashamed? There's no greater service than serving humanity."

Manikyam thought for a while and said, "It's only now that I felt I was also doing a great service."

"If you ■■■ to think deeply," advised the sage, "you'll still find a greater significance in it."

Manikyam realised that he was working at the institute as part of his punishment. But sage Sadanand had come there on his own and attended on those unfortunate children. He should not have found fault with the sage. From that day, he changed his attitude and became ■ reformed person.





That Too Needs Talent

Thankappan was a farmer of Thackalai. Chellappan was his only son. He had all respect and affection for his father. However, he was a lazy fellow. He used to roam about and would not do any work, least of all on the farm to help his ageing father. Thankappan was very sad about this.

One day he called Chellappan and said, "Chellappa, my son! How long will you idle away your time like this? Can't you do some work? If you do some work now, it'll stand in good stead when you grow up. Once I'm dead and gone, how will you manage your life? I'd therefore advise you to look after some work."

Chellappan realised that there was something in what his father was saying. "Father, I'm ready to

work. But do tell me what work shall I do."

Thankappan was very happy. "I think you can start working on our farm itself. A lot of birds and animals are destroying the crops. If you can scare them away, that'll be good for the time being."

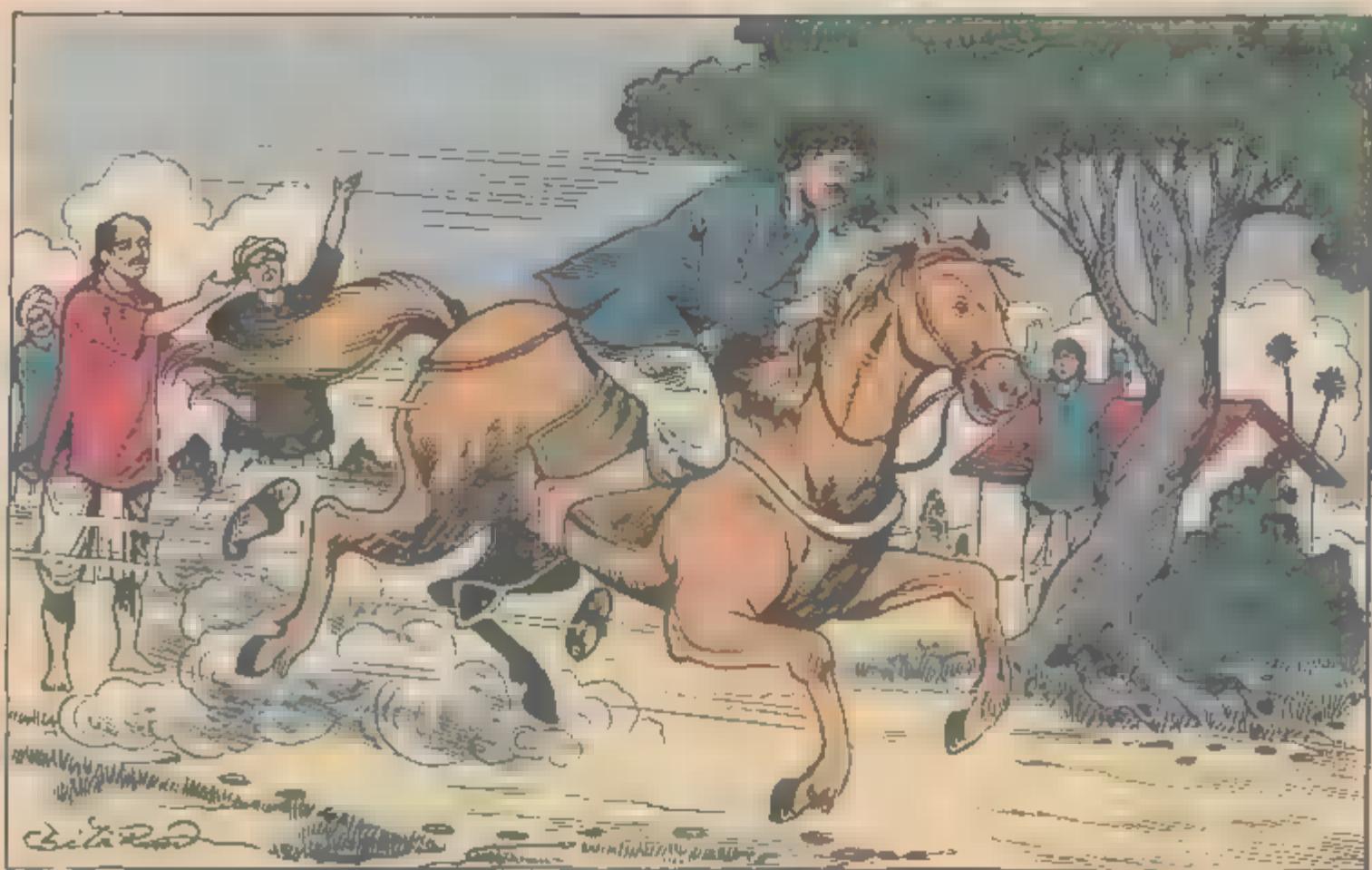
The same day Chellappan went to the farm and chased the birds and animals away. He did this the next day, and the next day, and the next day, too. The job had by then become monotonous to him. When he chased the birds from one end, they would go and settle on another side. He found himself running from one end to another, and some days there would be no end to his running. One day, he felt tired and decided to rest for a while. It

was then that an idea struck him. Suppose he were to imitate the voices of the birds and animals that were spoiling the crop? Slowly he learnt to imitate their voices—those of the dogs, cats, cows, horses, sparrows, pigeons. When the animals and birds listened to him, they would respond with their cries and calls. Gradually, he learnt how to communicate with them. Soon, he could also befriend them.

During the Navaratri festival, the Zamindar of the nearby town used to ride around the place. One day, he was out in the streets when his horse began misbehav-

ing. It ran fast. The Zamindar could not control the animal at all. Ultimately, the horse and its rider reached Thackalai. The Zamindar had caught hold of the horse by its neck for his life, and was trying his best not to fall down. The villagers heard the horse galloping at a terrific speed and were horrified to see the Zamindar clinging on to its neck. They tried to stop the horse but failed. The Zamindar now really feared for his life.

Chellappan, too, saw the unusual sight. He went and hid behind a tree and let out a neigh. The Zamindar's horse slowed down



on hearing ■ neigh and looked around for the animal. The Zamindar made good use of the opportunity and dismounted in a moment. He then looked around for the horse that had saved his life. As soon as he saw the Zamindar safe, Chellappan came out of his hiding, still neighing.

By then a crowd had gathered there. "Did you make that noise?" the Zamindar asked Chellappan.

"Sir, it was I who neighed!" replied Chellappan.

Thankappan, who was also in the crowd, now came forward and apologetically told the Zamindar, "Sir, he's my son, Chellappan. He can imitate the cries and calls of animals and birds. I had sent him to our farm to chase away the birds and animals. Instead, this is what he

learnt from them! Please bear with him."

"Now, don't blame him," said the Zamindar. "After all, imitating is also an art. Anybody and everybody cannot pick up this art. It needs talent. Today he neighed like a horse, and it made my horse stop on its track. And that saved my life, too. Mister, your son is a really talented person. As he had saved my life and in recognition of his talent, I'm gifting ten acres of my land to you both." The Zamindar then embraced Chellappan.

The villagers clapped and congratulated Chellappan. The Zamindar turned to him. "Next year, I shall come riding on an elephant and I would expect you to trumpet like an elephant!"

Chellappan nodded and bowed low to the Zamindar.





Borrowed Colour

Flamingos look lovely in their pink coat. If you ever thought that their natural colour is pink, you are mistaken. Their main food, as you may know, is the tiny blue-green algae that becomes pink during digestion. So, we can say that these birds get their colour from their food. Ah! you were thinking: if you were to eat tomatoes every day, would your cheeks....

No harm in trying!

WORLD OF NATURE

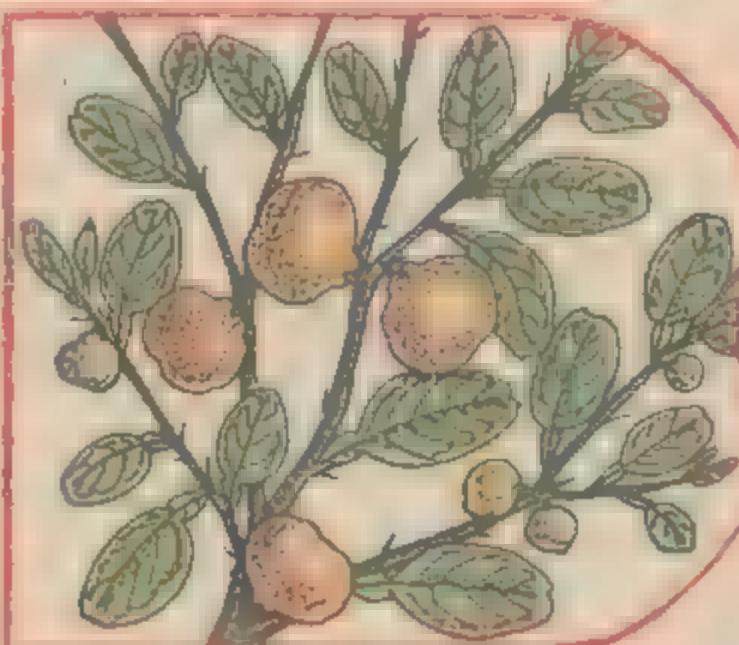
More About Giraffe

The 4-5 inch-long mouse has seven vertebrae. The giraffe's neck is 7ft long, so the number of vertebrae will be more. Wrong! It has the same number—seven vertebrae. Strange isn't it? The giraffe's tongue is 18 inches long. Your tongue is not more than 3 inches. The giraffe can run faster than a horse; of course, not a race horse! While running, it does not make any sound.



The Long-lived One

Have you heard of the Constable Tree? It was an orange tree that was brought to France during the early decades of the 15th century. It lived and bore fruit for more than 470 years! The normal life of an orange tree is about hundred years.





LET US KNOW

What is meant by 'Commonwealth countries'?

—*Lalitha Srinivasan, Bombay*

After Britain wound up its empire and began granting independence to its former colonies and protectorates, the Commonwealth was formed to safeguard matters of common interest. Independent states are "members of the Commonwealth", while former colonies and protectorates are given the rank of "Commonwealth countries". Small, self-governing countries, like Nauru, have been accorded special status.

What are Van Allen belts?

—*Jyotirajan Biswas, Durgapur*

They are two doughnut-shaped zones of atomic particles around the earth; they were discovered by James Van Allen in 1958. These particles, coming from the earth's upper atmosphere, are trapped by the earth's magnetic field. The inner belt lies between 1,000 and 5,000 km above the earth, while the outer belt lies from 15,000 to 25,000 km above the equator. The inner belt contains protons and electrons, and the outer one mostly electrons from the solar wind.

Which was the first film made in India?

—*Jogesh Khole, Pune*

"Alam Ara" was the first Indian talkie; it was released in March 1931. Dadha Phalke, who is considered as the Father of Indian Cinema, made "Raja Harishchandra" in 1913. The first Indian to make a film was Harishchandra Bhatvadekar, and the first film on an Indian story was "Pundalik" — a saint of Maharashtra.

CORRECTION : *The first Secretary General of the U.N. was Mr. Trygve Lie (as stated on page 11, February 1992 issue) and not Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld (as given on page 35, same issue), who succeeded Mr. Lie on his resignation.*



PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



T. C. Jain



S. B. Prasad

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail it to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs. 50/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

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PICKS FROM THE WISE

The wisdom of the wise and the experience of the aged are perpetuated by quotations.

—**Benjamin Disraeli**

The best way to convince a fool that he is wrong is to let him have his own way.

—**Josh Billings**

If fifty million people say a foolish thing, it is still a foolish thing.

—**Anatole France**



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